

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W

----- 018223

R 170743Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2150

INFO AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 23064

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, LA, TH

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REOPENING OF POINTS ON LAO-THAI BORDER

1. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION WITH LAO CHARGE KATH DITTHAVONG AUGUST 16 TO REQUEST URGENT ISSUANCE OF VISAS FOR CREW OF PLANE FLYING SENATOR MANSFIELD TO VIENTIANE FOLLOWING DAY (ON WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, KATH WAS MOST COOPERATIVE), EMBOFF ASKED HIM HOW HE THOUGHT FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAIS VISIT TO LAOS HAD GONE. KATH NOTED HE HAD JUST RETURNED TO BANGKOK AFTER TEN DAYS IN VIENTIANE IN CONNECTION WITH THE VISIT. HE SAID HE THOUGHT IT WENT WELL BUT INDICATED HE IS NOW SITTING BACK TO SEE HOW AND WHEN PHICHAIS COMES THROUGH WITH HIS PROMISE TO OBTAIN RTG AGREEMENT TO REOPEN TWO OR THREE BORDER POINTS. SOMEWHAT CYNICALLY, KATH OBSERVED THAT THE THAI RIGHT APPEARED TO HAVE BEGUN ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST OPENING ADDITIONAL POINTS WITH A NAWAPHON-LED DEMONSTRATION IN UBON RATCHATHANI ON AUGUST 16 (OF WHICH WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING) AND SUGGESTED THAT IT MAY BE THE FIRST OF OTHER ATTEMPTS TO SABOTAGE THE AGREEMENT.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT A NUMBER OF OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY IN THE NORTHEAST, ARE OPPOSED TO ANY WIDENING
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OF BORDER CONTACTS WITH LAOS, EMBASSY HAS NO INDICATION

THAT SENI GOVERNMENT IS ANY LESS RESOLVED THAN IN PAST
WEEKS TO REOPEN SEVERAL ADDITIONAL POINTS IN THE FUTURE.
INDEED, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MET AUGUST 16 TO DIS-
CUSS MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH REOPENINGS,
AFTER WHICH COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL REPORTEDLY INSPECT POSSIBLE
BORDER POINTS TO BE REOPENED, THE PROCESS CULMINATING IN
AN RTG-PDRL MEETING TO FINALIZE THE ACTION.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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